

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT		25X1
SUBJECT	The Sofia Central Prison	DATE DISTR.	8 April 1953	
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This is UNEVALUATED Information

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
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(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. The prison in Sofia is housed in a 3-story building which is located in the center of the city. Its capacity is 5,000 prisoners, 3,000 of whom are employed in the various large workshops inside the prison and 2,000 of whom are employed on building jobs, in agriculture, and as clerks in the Ministry of Justice and with the police. The prison administration consists of a manager, three assistants, and two high-ranking officials who handle political training.
2. Only men who have been sentenced by a court are held in the Sofia Central Prison. Men who have been arrested by an order issued through administrative channels and without a court hearing are sent to forced labor camps. In 1950 there were 60,000 such prisoners in camps situated in the Svishtov Okoliya on the banks of the Danube, in coal mine areas, in the Macedonian stone quarries, and in the north of Bulgaria.
3. Political prisoners are not detained in the Sofia Central Prison but are sent elsewhere.¹ There were never more than 25 female prisoners in the Sofia Prison during 1950, as at that time women were being held in the Sliven Prison in order to work in the textile industry there.
4. Each cell in the prison measures 2 by 3½ meters and holds seven or eight prisoners. In 1949 additional cells were built on the roof of the prison. The prisoners are housed in groups according to their occupation, so that there are cells for carpenters, locksmiths, mechanics, etc.

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5. The prison is divided into ten departments
- a. Department 1: in the basement, is used for the classification of prisoners on their arrival;
- b. Department 2: also in the basement, contains 400 to 500 prisoners and consists of a large hall with wood platform bunks for 12 to 13 men each; and
- c. Department 8: on the third floor, is reserved for prisoners condemned to death and awaiting execution, for uncompleted cases, and for prisoners who have committed a further crime inside the prison while serving their sentences.

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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The kitchen and washrooms are also in the basement.

6. The prison regime is not severe. Prisoners receive two meals per day, one at noon and one at 6:00 p.m. During the summer there is meat twice a week and vegetables in large quantities, but the main vegetable in winter is pickled cabbage. The bread ration, 300 grams, is not sufficient, but prisoners may buy bread at the prison canteen. The canteen price is, however, much higher than the official price outside.
7. Prisoners who are not working are permitted in the yard for exercise for an hour at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Those in the carpenters' or shoemakers' workshops, the garage, or the drawing office, may go out for an hour after 5:00 p.m. and from 10:00 to 10:15 a.m. during working hours. Drivers, clerks, and those employed outside the prison are practically free and are the chief source of contact with the outside world, bringing in news heard from the Voice of America, etc. Prisoners sentenced to ten years or more are allowed to write and receive one letter per month, receive a food parcel once a month, and have visitors once in six months. The privileges are greater for men with shorter sentences.

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8. The following prisoners

- a. Pavel Mishkov,

- b. Zakhari Raichev,

- c. Dzhalal,

- d. a monk who was formerly the head of the Rila monastery;

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- e. Khristo Brazikov,

- f. Trifon Kunev,

- g. Petko Kunin,

- h. two Yugoslav officers, accused of spying.

1. Comment: Other reports on the Sofia Central Prison contain the names of men who are obviously political prisoners. There is some indication, however, that the men so-named may have been at the Sofia Central Prison hospital for medical treatment.

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